

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00
/092 W

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P R 271856Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2547
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 01548

USEEC

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-1
TAGS: PORG, EGEN, UN, UK
SUBJECT: UN OVERVIEW: FIRST MEETING FEBRUARY 13, 1978

REF: (A) STATE 17255; (B) BRUSSELS 1600

SUMMARY: THE UK DOES NOT BELIEVE A STEERING GROUP CAN
BE AGREED TO. IT ALSO FEELS THAT THE US IS BEING UN-
REALISTIC IN SEEKING TO AVOID HAVING THE OVERVIEW GROUP
PERFORM A MONITORING OR EXPEDITING FUNCTION. THE
UK OTHERWISE IS IN AGREEMENT WITH THE US VIEWS CONTAINED
IN REF A. FRANK JUDD, MINISTER OF STATE AT THE FOREIGN
OFFICE, PROPOSES TO ATTEND THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE.
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END SUMMARY.

1. ON JAN 27 WE GAVE DEREK THOMAS, ASST UNDER SECRETARY
AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE, A PAPER BASED ON REF A AND LATER
RECEIVED FROM HIM THE FOREIGN OFFICE'S COMMENTS - WHICH
WERE EVIDENTLY THE SAME AS THE INSTRUCTIONS BEING SENT
TO MARSHALL OF UK UN WHO WAS ATTENDING AN EC COORDINA-

TION MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. THE BRITISH VIEW DIFFERS FROM OURS ON TWO MAJOR POINTS:

(A) BRITISH CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT A STEERING GROUP IS NON-NEGOTIABLE. BESIDES THAT, THE IDEA AROUSES SUSPICIONS OF THE G77 IN AN UNDESIRABLE WAY. THE SAME ISSUE AROSE AT THE END OF CIEC AND CAUSED PROBLEMS THEN. SUBSEQUENT BRITISH DISCUSSIONS WITH LDC LEADERS CONFIRM THE VIEW THAT THIS IS STILL A NON-STARTER. SECOND DIFFERENCE OR BRITISH DISSENT FROM THE US PROPOSAL IS THAT BRITISH, FRANCE, AND PERHAPS OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTIES ABOUT REPRESENTATION OR NON-REPRESENTATION ON THE STARTING GROUP AND THESE DIFFICULTIES ARE NOT HELPED BY THE SUGGESTION THAT THE US AND CHINA BE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE STEERING GROUP. THE BRITISH SUGGEST INSTEAD THE IDEA OF FORMING A "BUREAU". THIS COULD HAVE SEVEN MEMBERS: TWO CO-CHAIRMEN, ONE FROM A DC, ONE FROM AN LDC (AN IDEA THAT PROVED FRUITFUL IN CIEC), PLUS FIVE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES. THE BUREAU WOULD IN PRINCIPLE HAVE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS BUT IN THE BRITISH VIEW MIGHT IN A QUIET WAY EXPAND ITS FUNCTIONS - AND ORGANIZE SPECIAL DISCUSSION GROUPS, THUS SERVING MUCH OF THE PURPOSE OF THE STEERING GROUP.

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(B) BRITISH THINK THAT THE US VIEWS TILT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE IN THE DIRECTION OF MAKING THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE INTO A PURE DISCUSSION GROUP. THE BRITISH DOUBT THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO GET AWAY WITH IGNORING THE MANDATE FOR THE COMMITTEE STATED IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF UNGA RESOLUTION 32/174. THUS WHILE THE BRITISH CERTAINLY GO ALONG WITH THE FIRST PART OF THE LAST SENTENCE OF THE STATEMENT OF US OBJECTIVES IN REF A ("WE DO NOT WANT THIS BODY TO SERVE AS A FORUM FOR NEGOTIATIONS.") THEY THINK THE TWO SUBSEQUENT CLAUSES ARE FAR TOO OBVIOUSLY OUT OF LINE WITH THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE. SOMEWHAT THE SAME CONSIDERATIONS MOTIVATE THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE US IDEAS ON AGENDA. WHILE AGREEING THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID ADOPTING THE LDC "SHOPPING LIST" THE BRITISH THINK IT IS PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE THE SORT OF AGENDA SUGGESTED BY THE US. THE UK DOES NOT THINK IT REALISTIC TO PUSH ASIDE THE MONITORING AND IMPETUS GIVING FUNCTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE. THE BRITISH IDEA OF A NEGOTIABLE AGENDA HAS FOUR MAIN HEADINGS:

1. MONITORING OF NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES CURRENTLY
UNDER DISCUSSION SUCH AS THE COMMON FUND, DEBT, LDC
ASPECTS OF THE MTN, UNIDO.

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2. PROVIDING IMPETUS.
3. EXPEDITING WORK.
4. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON GLOBAL ECONOMIC ISSUES.

THE SECOND AND THIRD SUB-ITEMS CANNOT IN THE NATURE
OF THINGS BE SPELLED OUT IN ADVANCE. THE FOURTH MIGHT
BE BUT THE BRITISH DON'T HAVE DETAILED PROPOSALS. THE
BRITISH HAVE A FINAL FALLBACK POSITION ON THE LDC
SHOPPING LIST WHICH IS TO ALLOW IT BUT ONLY AS AN ANNEX
TO AN AGREED AGENDA PREFACED BY A NOTE MAKING CLEAR THAT

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IT IS NOT AGREED BY ALL PARTICIPANTS.

3. FOR THE MOST PART THE BRITISH AGREE TO THE REST OF THE US VIEWS PRESENTED IN REF A. THEY DO HAVE A CAVEAT REGARDING THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING (PARAGRAPH 3 UNDER AGENDA IN REF A). THE BRITISH FEEL THAT THE G77 MAY AGREE TO A DISCUSSION OF BROAD SYSTEMIC ISSUES BUT WILL WANT MORE. BRITISH THINK IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO TALK ABOUT MATTERS THAT APPROACH THE SUBSTANTIVE, FOR EXAMPLE ABOUT HOW TO UN-BLOCK THE COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS. AS FOR THE LOCUS OF MEETING, THOMAS SAID THE IDEA OF MEETING OTHER THAN IN NEW YORK OR GENEVA WAS ATTRACTIVE IN PRINCIPLE BUT REQUIRED INTER-AGENCY DISCUSSION IN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

4. THOMAS SAID THE BRITISH HAD TRIED AT COREPER MEETING OF JANUARY 26 TO GET A SPECIAL BRUSSELS MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT AGREED TO FOR NEXT WEEK PRIOR TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER COUNCIL OF FEBRUARY 7; HOWEVER, IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT THE NEXT STAGE SHOULD BE ANOTHER COREPER DISCUSSION FOLLOWED BY POSSIBLE MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION ON FEBRUARY 7.

5. AS FOR REPRESENTATION, THOMAS WILL ATTEND THE PREPARATORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL WORK BUT MINISTER OF STATE, FRANK JUDD, WISHES TO ATTEND THE OVERVIEW. THE BRITISH THINK THAT IT WAS MORE OR LESS AGREED AT THE XCSS MEETING THAT THE COOPER/JUDD LEVEL WAS THE APPROPRIATE ONE FOR THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE. DURING THE PREPARATORY MEETINGS, THOMAS ON BEHALF OF THE UK WILL TRY TO PERSUADE OTHERS THAT COMPARABLE REPRESENTATION TO THAT OF GREAT BRITAIN IS NECESSARY FOR A SERIOUS
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APPROACH TO THE COMMITTEE AND ITS WORK.

6. FINALLY, THOMAS ASKED ONE QUESTION REGARDING UNDERLYING US AIMS. HE SAID THAT DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE CIEC THE US AND THE UK HAD AGREED THAT IT WAS TACTICALLY UNWISE TO PUSH ENERGY DISCUSSIONS IN A NORTH/SOUTH CONTEXT. FOR THE MOMENT, AT THE LEAST, THAT REMAINED THE BRITISH POSITION. HE WONDERED, HOWEVER, WHETHER IT MIGHT BE A MAIN AIM OF THE US TO

HAVE ENERGY FEATURED IN THE OVERVIEW. THE EMBASSY
WOULD APPRECIATE BEING AIDED IN RESPONDING TO THOMAS.

BREWSTER

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